

THE

GOBRECHT

JOURNAL



**For Collectors
of the**

**LIBERTY SEATED COIN SERIES
VOLUME THIRTY ISSUE #89**

www.HeritageCoins.com A Free Online Community
of Numismatists - Worldwide • Join Today!

The collage features several items: a 'PLATINUM NIGHT' auction catalog for January 7-10, 2004; a 'FUN 2004' auction catalog for January 8-9, 2004; a 'HERITAGE WORLD COIN AUCTIONS' catalog; a 'HERITAGE CURRENCY AUCTIONS' catalog; and a screenshot of the HeritageCoins.com website showing various auction listings and community features.

During January 2004, Heritage auctioned more than \$40 million of rare coins and currency. Photographs, lot descriptions, and prices realized for all of these lots are available for free to the 105,000+ numismatists at www.HeritageCoins.com.

When the price for all this information is FREE, can you afford not to join?

Heritage's Permanent Auction Archives – one of the many free benefits for the 105,000+ numismatists in our online community.

HERITAGE NUMISMATIC AUCTIONS, INC.

HERITAGE WORLD COIN AUCTIONS

HERITAGE – CURRENCY AUCTIONS OF AMERICA

HERITAGE
Numismatic Auctions, Inc.



Steve Ivy: ANA LM 1687
Jim Hogenbrum: ANA LM 1186
Greg Ripstein: ANA LM 2532

3500 Maple Avenue • Dallas, Texas 75219-3941 • 1-800-US COINS (800-872-6467) • 214-528-3500 • FAX: 214-443-8425
www.HeritageCoins.com • e-mail: Bid@HeritageCoins.com • www.CurrencyAuctions.com • e-mail: Notes@HeritageCoins.com

OUR PLEDGE

To encourage, promote and dispense numismatic knowledge of Liberty Seated coins; to cultivate fraternal relations among its members and all those interested in the science of numismatics.

OFFICERS

John McCloskey President/Editor

Larry Briggs Vice President

Mark Sheldon Secretary-Treasurer

**This is a non-profit organization dedicated to the attributions of the
LIBERTY SEATED COIN SERIES.**

Printed and Bound
by



Additional copies available for \$5.00 from John McCloskey

No material in this publication
may be reproduced without permission of the authors.

GOBRECHT JOURNAL

Official Publication

of the

LIBERTY SEATED COLLECTORS CLUB

VOLUME 30

MARCH, 2004

NO. 89

CONTENTS

BRUCE BURNHAM SEATED QUARTER SET SOLD by Leonard Augsburger	3
WHAT ARE THE 100 GREATEST U.S. COINS? by Robert A. Izydore	12
THE MINT ON CARSON STREET by Rusty Goe	16
TRACKING DOWN A RARE BOOK ABOUT THE NEW ORLEANS MINT by David Ginsburg	20
GRAY-CARBONEAU THEORY USED IN RED BOOK	22
AN 1842-O HALF DOLLAR WITH A REVERSE PARTIAL BROCKAGE by Gerald L. Kochel	23
LSCC SPRING REGIONAL MEETING	25
SOME ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE 1851-O SEATED DOLLAR	26
AN 1876-S HALF DOLLAR WITH A REPUNCHED DATE by Mike Stettenbenz	27
PHOTOGRAPHS FOR JOURNAL ARTICLES	29
MEASURING THE QUALITY OF A SEATED DOLLAR COLLECTION	30
NEW INFORMATION ON THE 1840-O WITH DRAPERY HALF DIME by Mark Sheldon	32
AN ANALYSIS FOR CARSON CITY SEATED DOLLAR SETS by John W. McCloskey	34
THE 1875-CC DIME by Weimar W. White	40
RECOLLECTIONS OF A SEATED QUARTER COLLECTOR by John W. McCloskey	43
SHISHMANIAN & GARSTANG WIN AHWASH AWARD FOR 2003	50
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR	52

Bruce Burnham Seated Quarter Set Sold

by

Leonard Augsburg

David Lawrence Rare Coins recently sold the Bruce Burnham collection of Liberty Seated quarters in a fixed price offering during June 2003. Bruce Burnham began collecting Seated quarters in 1969 and assembled the quarter set several times while continually upgrading the coins in his collection. This selection of his coins contained 53 pieces from the series with all of them except the 1873-CC coin being nicely matched in grades from EF-40 to MS-64. Over half of the coins in the set were struck at the branch mints and 17 were in mint state. The average grade of the 53 coins was AU-55.

The 16 New Orleans coins that included examples of two rare varieties in high grades were without doubt the highlight of the collection. The New Orleans varieties were an 1842-O Small Date quarter in NGC EF-45 and an 1854-O Huge O quarter in NGC AU-50. These varieties are rare and in demand in these grades. The New Orleans coins also included several condition census pieces such as an 1847-O quarter in NGC MS-62 and an 1850-O quarter in NGC MS-63. Other important New Orleans coins were an 1849-O quarter in PCGS EF-40, an 1851-O quarter in PCGS AU-55 and an 1852-O quarter in NGC AU-55. Among the San Francisco coins were condition rarities such as an 1859-S quarter in PCGS EF-40, an 1860-S quarter in NGC EF-40 and an 1872-S quarter in NGC EF-40. Early Carson City coins were represented by an 1872-CC quarter in PCGS EF-40 and an 1873-CC quarter in F-15.

This selection also included a few important Philadelphia coins. These were an 1838 quarter in NGC MS-63, an 1853 No Arrows quarter in NGC AU-55 and an 1866 quarter in NGC MS-63. Since these coins did not appear at auction I have selected one coin



1872-CC Quarter with Wide CC Mintmark

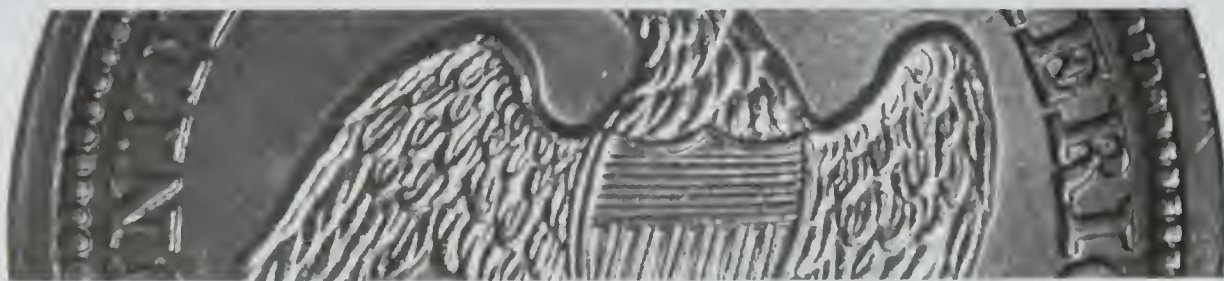
from each mint to illustrate and describe in greater detail. I would like to thank club president John McCloskey for providing the descriptions of the four Burnham coins.

The photographs of the Burnham quarters were taken by Rory Rea, who generously donated his time and services during the ANA Convention in Baltimore.

1850-O Quarter



This is a beautifully toned 1850-O quarter that has been graded NGC MS-63. It is one of the finest known specimens of this date but it has some weakness through the denticles from the 5th to the 8th stars. This piece is an example of the Briggs 1-B variety with clear evidence of rust running throughout the obverse design. The date has been lightly impressed into the obverse die resulting in a very weak lower serif for the digit 1. On the reverse the Large O mintmark is closer to the branch stem than the feathered shaft and it is thinner on the bottom left. The lowest horizontal line in the shield is sharply doubled and it extends out beyond the right edge of the shield. Heavy die rust lines extend down into the field under both of the eagle's wings.



1850-O quarter with the lowest horizontal line in the reverse shield sharply doubled. This shield line extends out beyond the right edge of the shield and into the eagle's wing.



1850-O quarter with evidence of rust running throughout the obverse design. The date has been lightly impressed resulting in a very weak lower serif for the digit 1.



1850-O quarter with a Large O mintmark that is thinner on the bottom left. Heavy rust lines extend down into the field under both of the eagle's wings.

1866 Quarter



This was the year that the mint added the motto **IN GOD WE TRUST** to the reverse design and this 1866 quarter is a beautiful mint state coin that has been graded NGC MS-63. This coin is an example of the Briggs 1-A variety with its date centered in the field but with the date sloping slightly upward from left to right. It has the characteristic die scratch for this obverse that runs through the center of the 6th denticle to the left of the 1 in the date. While this is a nice mint state coin it shows the characteristic weakness through the horizontal stripes in the reverse shield. There is also weakness in the eagle's feathers to the left of the shield and in the arrow feathers below the point of the shield. Of particular note on this coin is a die crack that begins at the rim and runs up through the lower part of a denticle, through the center of the Q in QUAR and on to the open bud in the branch.



1866 quarter with date centered in field showing a die scratch that runs through the center of the 6th denticle to the left of the 1 in the date.



Mint state 1866 quarter with weakness through the horizontal stripes in the reverse shield.



1866 quarter with die crack that begins at the rim and runs up through the lower part of a denticle, through the center of the Q in QUAR and on to the open bud in the branch.

1872-S Quarter



The 1872-S quarter is very rare in mint state and even hard to find in grades approaching mint state. This NGC EF-40 coin has nice clean surfaces and is a very nice representative of this underrated issue. This is an example of the Briggs 1-A variety with the date nearly centered in the field. The coin shows the characteristic die scratches on the left arm between the elbow and shoulder. On the reverse the Small s mintmark is centered over the R in QUAR. There is a strong die clash line that begins in the field to the right of the first S in STATES. This clash mark runs through the scroll and into the field below the letters in WE. It then runs through the scroll again and continues on toward the first A in AMERICA.



1872-S quarter with die scratches on the inside of the left arm between the elbow and shoulder.



1872-S quarter with strong die clash mark that runs through the field below the letters WE on the scroll. This line extends through the scroll out toward the first S in STATES on the left and out toward the first A in AMERICA on the right.



1872-S quarter with Small s mintmark that is high in the field and centered over the R in QUAR.

1872-CC Quarter



The 1872-CC quarter is extremely rare in mint state and still very rare in grades above EF-45. This PCGS EF-40 specimen is one of the nicer surviving specimens from this issue. It is an example of the Briggs 1-A variety with the heavy die scratch that runs at a diagonal through the obverse shield. This coin also has a die scratch that runs through the 4th denticle to the left of the 1 in the date. There is another die scratch running through the denticles between the 1st and 2nd stars and a final die scratch running through the denticles between the 11th and 12th stars. The reverse shows the widely spaced CC mintmark that appears on the only die used to strike quarters during the early years at the Carson City mint.



1872-CC quarter with heavy die scratch in obverse shield and a die scratch through the 4th denticle to the left of the 1 in the date.



1872-CC quarter with die scratch running through denticles between the 1st and 2nd stars. This scratch is clearly visible in the gaps between the denticles over the 2nd star.



1872-CC quarter with die scratch running through denticles between the 11th and 12th stars. This scratch begins at the top of a denticle over the 11th star and runs down at a diagonal through four denticles before it ends over the 12th star.

What are the 100 Greatest U.S. Coins?

by

Robert A. Izydore

In Issue #88 of the journal *Weimar White* described the Liberty Seated coins in the book *100 Greatest U.S. Coins* by Jeff Garrett and Ron Guth. This interesting book contains nice photographs of the listed coins and includes some good background information about them. The Numismatic Literary Guild and the Professional Numismatists Guild (PNG) both chose this book as their best numismatic book for 2003. The top 20 coins were ranked by 84 PNG members while the remaining 80 were ranked by the authors. The PNG members were given a list of the top 100 greatest coins and asked to rank them. The members had the option of adding any coins to the list that they thought should be included. White's summary stated that the concept of greatness was based on the factors of rarity, value, quality, popularity, beauty and history. It was nice to see that the authors ranked 16 Liberty Seated coins among the 100 greatest U.S. coins in their book. The top three ranked coins were the 1804 silver dollar, the 1913 Liberty Head nickel, and the 1933 double eagle, respectively.

White pointed out that greatness is a subjective quality, and I wholeheartedly agree. However, as I look at the coins ranked at the top of the list, it is apparent that these are the coins that sell for the highest prices at auction and in private sales. In other words the rank given to a coin was heavily skewed by its value. An argument can be made that this is reasonable. If a coin is rare, popular, and attractive enough, it can be classified as great, and its price can be said to be a barometer of its greatness. However, value is not the only measure of greatness. It is also true that historical significance and impact make something or someone great. George Washington and Abraham Lincoln are great because of their roles in the establishment and preservation of our country at a time of national crisis. There is no monetary value involved. Industrialists such as Andrew Carnegie and Henry Ford made a lot of money, but that is not why they are great. They are great because their achievements in their respective industries changed the landscape of America and the lifestyle of its citizens. The paintings of Pablo Picasso are great because they represent the development of the painting style called cubism that pioneered the modern art movement. They are expensive, but their price is not the primary reason for their greatness.

Given the fact that the three coins at the top of the greatest 100 list satisfy the requirements of rarity, value and popularity, let's examine their historical significance and impact. For many years it was believed that the 1804 silver dollar was actually minted in 1804. Its reputation and popularity as a true numismatic rarity grew on that belief. It was crowned the *King of American Coins* by Fort Worth dealer B. Max Mehl in the early part of the 20th century and even earlier by the Chapman brothers. As such these coins were coveted by those numismatists who could afford to own one. Since 1962 we have known that these dollars were minted more than three decades after 1804. They are not genuine coins in the usual sense. The eight Class I dollars were struck from new dies in 1834-1835 at the request of the Department of State. They were then included in presentation sets, two of which were gifts to the rulers of Muscat

and Siam. The Class II and Class III restrikes from the 1850s were illegally made by mint employees and sold to collectors. The Class I dollars have some historical significance in that two of them were presented to foreign rulers. The Class II and Class III coins have no real historical significance. None of the 1804 dollars had any historical impact on the development of coinage in America. The five known 1913 Liberty Head nickels became famous as rarities in the 1930s as a result of advertisements placed by B. Max Mehl offering to buy them. These nickels were believed to be authentic by the public. It is now known that they were struck without legal authorization by one or more mint employees and that they were not authorized U.S. coins. They too had no historic impact on the development of U.S. coinage. The 1933 double eagles were struck as legal U.S. coins before they were ordered melted by the government under Presidential order #6260. A few were removed from the mint in some way, but most were eventually seized by the Treasury Department. Only the King Farouk specimen and those in the Smithsonian Institution are known to have survived. They are historically significant in that they represent the last regular issue gold coins minted in the United States.

When I first read that a book had been published that listed the 100 greatest U.S. coins, I took some time to consider what the top ranked coins might be. My choices were made largely on the basis of my perception of their historical significance and impact. It was my feeling that the three greatest coins were the 1793 chain cent, the 1794 silver dollar and the 1836 Judd-60 Gobrecht dollar. I felt confident that these coins would be ranked within the top five or six coins in the book and certainly be placed in the top ten. The 1793 chain cent was America's first coin having the unit value of 1 cent or 1/100 dollar, and since it was minted earlier in the year than the 1793 half cent, it was the first regular issue coin to be minted. It was also the first U.S. copper coin. The 1794 silver dollar represents the nation's first one dollar denomination coin, the basic unit of our coinage. It along with the 1794 half dime and half dollar represent



1836 Judd-60 Gobrecht Dollar

the first regular issue silver coins. These were also the first regular issue coins depicting Liberty whose image would remain on circulating U.S. coins until the 1930s. The 1793 chain cent and the 1794 silver dollar both had very low mintages, and both are rare. The chain cent was minted for less than a year while the flowing hair dollar was minted for only two years. However, these two coins are ranked 15 and 20, respectively, in the book.

The 1836 Judd-60 Gobrecht silver dollar is a true classic among U.S. coins. Christian Gobrecht's flying eagle design is truly majestic and it was the first silver dollar coin in 33 years, the first coin to depart from the Liberty head design, and one of the first coins struck on the mint's new steam presses. Gobrecht dollars are very unusual in that they were minted with brilliant proof finishes and then placed into circulation. Most importantly the Gobrecht dollar was the first coin to feature the Liberty Seated design that was to dominate U.S. silver coinage for the next 55 years. It has a very low mintage, and it is rare. This coin is highly prized by collectors. It was quite surprising that the PNG dealers did not include it in their top 20 choices of the 100 greatest U.S. coins. It was even more surprising that the authors of the book placed it as low as 69th on their list. What were they thinking? Twelve Liberty Seated coins were rated higher than the Gobrecht dollar but none of them can be rated higher in terms of historical significance and impact. All twelve of the higher rated coins have higher listed values, while two of the three lower rated coins have lower listed values. The proof 1884 and 1885 Trade Dollars are clandestine issues and the proof 1866 No Motto quarter, half dollar and silver dollar are fantasy coins. However, they are all rated higher than the 1836 Gobrecht dollar. I would like to believe that the price of the 1836 Judd-60 Gobrecht dollar will eventually rise relative to the other listed Liberty Seated coins as its historical significance becomes more appreciated by collectors.

There are many rare U.S. coins that were not legally authorized. Most of them were made at the mint for sale to collectors years after their indicated date. The 1804 silver dollar and the 1913 Liberty Head nickel are just two examples of these unauthorized coins. Some Gobrecht dollars also fall into this category. They include dollars struck in copper, 1836 name below base restrikes, 1838 restrikes and 1838 and 1839 dated coins with stars on both the obverse and reverse. These unauthorized coins have been well publicized in the collecting community and at times this information has reached the general public. This publicity has probably been good for the hobby because of the attention it has drawn. Publicity increases the desirability of the coins to collectors and investors, and creates avid competition to own them. Their prices are high, and they are considered great coins despite their dubious origin. But do they really deserve to be considered great? They have little historic significance and have had little or no impact on true U.S. coinage. Should they really be classified as coins at all? A better title for the book might be *100 Most Famous U.S. Coins*.

Many collectors and most investors are probably not aware of the true background for some of the high priced U.S. coins. Even though this information is now available, many people have either not read it or are unaware of it. When I first read in *A Guide Book of United States Coins* that certain coins were restrikes, I did not really understand the true meaning of that term until some time later. The phrase "made at the mint for sale to collectors" does not give the full story either. The Guide Book states that the proof 1866 No Motto quarter and half dollar are unique and that there are two known examples of the proof 1866 No Motto silver dollar. There is a statement indicating that the proof 1866 No Motto quarter and the proof 1884 and 1885 Trade Dollars were not issued for circulation, but there is no mention that these coins are

fantasy or clandestine issues. It appears that the true history of these coins tends to be glossed over in the Guide Book and some other publications. Some auction catalogs incorrectly refer to them as restrikes. Individuals and firms that sell these coins have a responsibility to inform potential customers of their origin. The customers can then better decide how much they wish to pay for them. This is not always done. It can be argued that collectors who are willing to pay high prices to purchase these coins must surely know about their origin, but this might not be the case when authoritatively written auction descriptions do not accurately describe their background. To their credit, the authors of the 100 greatest coins book identify those coins that were struck without legal authorization.

The role that publicity plays in determining the value of a coin cannot be overemphasized. Most of the publicity these coins receive presents them in a positive light that promotes even higher prices. The high ranking awarded by PNG dealers to the top rated coins in the book is additional publicity that serves to validate and preserve the status quo. If people were unaware of their price histories, I believe it is unlikely that they would choose the 1804 dollar, the 1913 Liberty Head nickel, and the 1933 double eagle as the three greatest U.S. coins.

It would be interesting to see what coins would be rated among the 100 greatest coins if collectors were asked to compile the list. The general numismatic community might not perceive greatness the same as professional numismatists. It would also be better if a starting list of 100 coins was not provided. The participating PNG dealers and the authors of the book undoubtedly gave their best effort and they probably should not be faulted for their value oriented thinking. As an enthusiastic collector of Liberty Seated coins I might assign more historic significance to the 1836 Judd-60 Gobrecht dollar than does a collector of another series. I believe that coins such as the 1792 half disme, the 1796 and 1797 half dollars, the 1856 Flying Eagle cent, and some of the early gold rarities also deserve consideration for some of the highest ranks. What then are the 100 greatest U.S. coins? This question can never be answered to everyone's satisfaction because of the subjectivity involved. However, it is an intriguing question to ponder.

References

1. Walter H. Breen, "Walter Breen's Complete Encyclopedia of U.S. and Colonial Coins", Doubleday, 1988.
2. Professional Coin Grading Service (PCGS) website: www.pcgs.com/coinguide/guide.shtml.
3. J. Hewitt Judd, "United States Pattern Coins, Experimental and Trial Pieces", Q. David Bowers editor, Whitman Publishing, 2003.
4. R.S. Yeoman, "A Guide Book of United States Coins", Kenneth Bressett, editor, Whitman Publishing, 53rd Edition, 2000.
5. Gerald Tebben, "Reading the Numbers" Coin World, January 19, 2004.

THE MINT ON CARSON STREET

by

Rusty Goe

A TRIBUTE TO THE CARSON CITY MINT & A GUIDE TO A COMPLETE SET OF “CC” COINS

Ever since the Carson City Mint began coinage production in February 1870, coins stamped with the CC mintmark have captured the interest of collectors and intrigued historians studying the American west. A new book entitled *The Mint on Carson Street* by Rusty Goe pays tribute to this popular Nevada branch mint and the many wonderful coins that were produced there. The book contains true stories about the Comstock miners who produced the gold and silver that was used to make the coins at the Carson City mint. It also discusses some of the political maneuverings that influenced the success or failure of operations at this local coinage facility. Brief biographical profiles are presented for the men and women connected with the legacy of the Carson City Mint, including individuals who were mint superintendents, railroad operators, Treasury secretaries or coin collectors.

This new book is not just a reference book for collectors. It provides a brief history of Nevada from its early statehood years and describes activities at the Carson City Mint before it opened as a minting facility in 1870. The book describes coinage operations during the years when the mint produced millions of coins for circulation in the old west and it provides an interesting account of the various scandals that shook this small branch mint to its foundation. The branch mint closed its coining operations in 1893 but the building continued to serve as an assay office until 1933. The old Mint building was then turned into a hallowed Nevada museum and it currently contains exhibits of Carson City coinage among the historical artifacts on display at the facility.

The Carson City Mint struck six denominations of silver coinage and three denominations of gold coinage from 1870 to 1893. The new book provides a guide to all of the coins of each denomination produced at this western branch mint. It



The Mint on Carson Street

contains a one to five page summary of historical information for each of the 111 Carson City coins. The first page of the presentation on the 1870-CC dollar is shown with this article. These descriptions include survival estimates by grade for each date in the series and pedigree information on important Carson City coins that have appeared at auction over the years.

The book offers suggestions on how to build interesting sets of Carson City coins for the date, variety or type collector. It also contains numerous charts on Carson City coins and includes population data and historical pricing information for each date in the series. There is a Top 25 list of Carson City coins that includes the key dates from the various denominations struck at this historic branch mint during the latter part of the 19th century.

The book contains 530 pages of interesting material on Nevada and the Carson City Mint. Additional information on this new book can be obtained from Marie Goe at Southgate Coins, 5032 S. Virginia St, Reno, Nevada 89502. She can also be reached by telephone at (775) 322-4455 or my e-mail at: mariesgate@sbcglobal.net. The book is listed at a Retail Price of \$69.95. As a special introductory offer LSCC members will be given an opportunity to receive a 20% discount on this price for orders received by April 26, 2004. Until this date club members will therefore be able to purchase copies of this new book for \$56 each. Please add \$8 for shipping and handling, plus an extra \$2 for each additional copy.



The image in the magnifying glass is a close up picture of the CC mintmark on an early Carson City dime. Only one reverse is known for 1871-CC, 1872-CC, 1873-CC and 1874-CC dimes. This reverse develops a strong die crack that runs from the right ribbon down through the center of the two Cs and out into the field. This die crack is a key feature that helps to authenticate early Carson City dimes.

1870-CC



(Photo courtesy Bowers and Merena)

Mintage: 12,462**

Finest Knowns*:

PCGS MS-63 (8) ***

NGC MS-63 (3)

PCGS MS-62 (3)

NGC MS-62 (1)

Notable Pedigrees:

World's Greatest Collection (1945)

R.L. Miles (1969)

Fairfield Collection (1977)

Auction '84 Stack's (1984)

French Family (1989)

ex: Auction '84

James A. Stack (1995)

Eliasberg (1997)

Sonnheim Collection (1998)

Dr. John C. Wong (2001)

L.K Rudolph (2003)

Survival Estimates in All Grades: 450-650
Estimated in Uncirculated: 20-25
Estimated in XF to AU: 200-300
Total Certified Examples
in All Grades (PCGS and NGC)*: 335

(* As of July 2003)

(** Some Sources Say 11,758)

(*** Possible resubmissions of several of the same coins)

REFLECTIONS:

Carson City is on the line of the old Virginia and Truckee Railroad, 14 miles from Virginia City and 34 miles from Reno. When the mint in this quiet settlement opened for business on January 8, 1870, a whoosh of chilly winter air blew through the front door and filled the entryway. Superintendent Abraham Curry stood at the open door and waved to passers by. No matter what degree of progress or growth Carson City would achieve in the future, it would always be remembered for this coinage facility.

Abraham Curry was raised in New York and was a business owner in Cleveland before moving west at the age of 40. He spent a short time in San Francisco before backtracking and heading east, eventually lowering his anchor on the property that became Carson City. Curry knew that his new home did not compare to the metropolises he had left behind. Populations in cities like Cleveland, Ohio and Syracuse, New York (near Curry's birthplace)

were larger than the entire population of the state where Carson City was located. He could have remained in any of those thriving communities and used his entrepreneurial spirit to become part of the infrastructure. But something in Curry drove him to establish his own thriving community—an infrastructure of his design.

When he stood at the front door of the Carson City Mint on that January morning in 1870 he must have been one of the most gratified men in the country. His town now had a government facility reserved for only a few select locations: Philadelphia, San Francisco and now, Carson City. What would his friends back east think?

A month later, on February 10, 1870, it was time for the sound of the coin press to finally roar and from morning until night that big 12-ton Morgan and Orr clanged out 2,303 new 1870-CC Seated Liberty silver dollars. Curry had already planned who the first coin was going to be reserved for: the number one citizen in the United States, President Ulysses S. Grant.

Tracking Down a Rare Book about the New Orleans Mint

by

David Ginsburg

While doing research on the economic activity in New Orleans during the 1840s and 1850s, I found *A Medley of Cultures* on the website of the Louisiana State Museum. Each chapter of this book includes a substantial bibliography and one listing for Chapter 3 just leaped out at me: *A History of the United States Mint, New Orleans, Louisiana* by Charles J. Collins Jr., Baton Rouge: LSU Printing Office, 1970. I was very intrigued by this listing since I didn't know that a book about the New Orleans mint even existed and I was soon speculating on what secrets it might contain.

While searching for a copy of this book I checked Internet booksellers but nobody had a copy of sale. I also checked numismatic booksellers but none of them had even heard of it. The only positive lead I got was from one Internet bookseller who indicated that there was a copy of the book in the New Orleans Public Library. I tried to obtain this book through an interlibrary loan but I was told that it was in the reference section of the library and could not be checked out. It appeared that getting a copy of the book would be more difficult than I had initially expected.

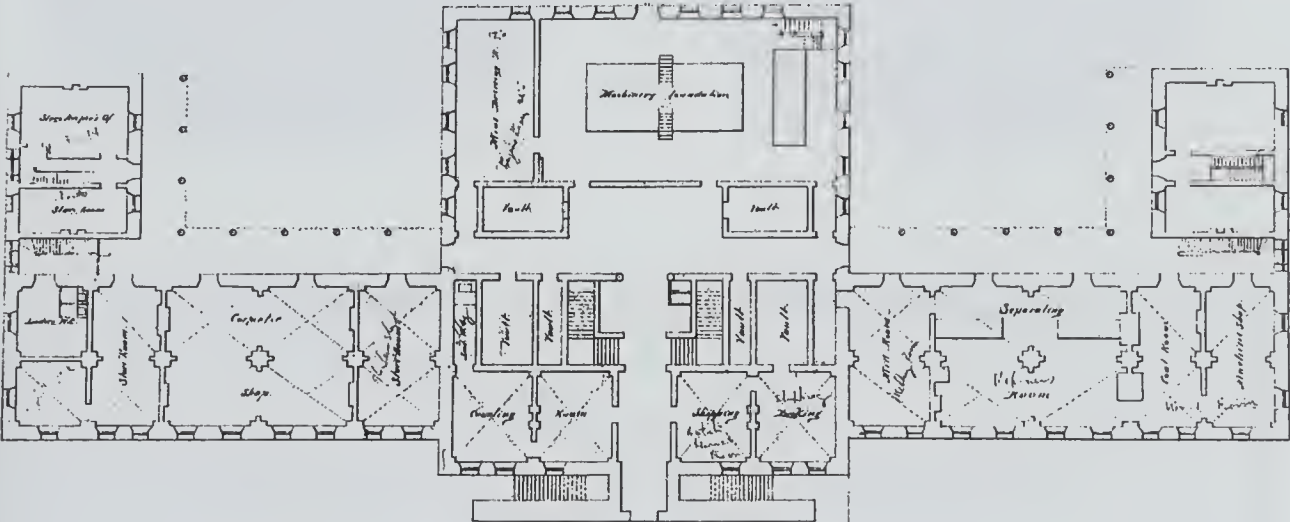
I then contacted the editor of the weekly E-Sylum newsletter of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society asking for information on the availability of this rare book. Within a few days I received a response from a very distinguished numismatist who owned a copy. He arranged to have a friend send me a photocopy of the book and within a few days I had the package in hand. I discovered that the book was indeed about the New Orleans Mint but it might be better described as a manuscript. It was written by an architecture student at Louisiana State University so its focus is mostly on the mint building designed by Philadelphia architect William Strickland rather than on the activities that took place there. The manuscript is 80 pages in length and traces the history of the building, describes its uses through the years and provides information on repairs that were made to the structure after it was built. It gives the text of the building contract, includes floor plans for the Mint and provides specifications for its construction and pictures of its architectural details. My only regret was that I had a photocopy of the manuscript with the consequential degradation in picture quality.

In an effort to obtain an *original* copy of the manuscript I tried to contact its author, Charles J. Collins Jr., whom I believed to be either a practicing architect or an architecture professor. An Internet search led me to Mr. Collins who was somewhat surprised to be questioned about his 33-year old manuscript. He told me it originated from a \$500 scholarship that was sponsored by the Baton Rouge Bureau for Lath and Plaster and offered to LSU architecture students who needed help in producing a research paper. He said that 15 to 20 copies of the manuscript were originally made in 1970.

In my conversation with Mr. Collins we discussed the extent of his research on the Mint building. He told me that he obtained the floor plans for the building from the National Archives and that he interviewed some of the New Orleans architects and builders who were involved in renovations at the Mint. We also discussed his assertion that William Strickland designed the Mint building without ever visiting the city of New Orleans. He said that he was advised to look for evidence of a visit in the

society pages of the newspapers during that era. The arrival of a prominent visitor from the distant city of Philadelphia would certainly have been mentioned in the New Orleans newspapers during the 1830s. Since no evidence of a visit to the city was ever found, he believes that Mr. Strickland designed a building that was more suited for construction on the firm bedrock soil of Philadelphia rather than on the soft swampy soil of New Orleans. As a consequence, the Mint building developed structural problems within five years of its construction that required a series of repairs and supports over the next 15 years to keep it from sinking into the unstable soil.

My numismatic adventure while tracking down a copy of this scarce manuscript on the New Orleans Mint has been a rewarding experience that I will never forget. I initially obtained a photocopy of the document through the kindness of two strangers who gave me the opportunity to study the original research conducted by Mr. Collins on the Mint building. I had the pleasure of an extended conversation with the author and an opportunity to question him about his work while preparing this interesting document. This experience has taught me that there are more things to numismatics than just finding another rare coin.



This drawing is the floor plan for the basement level of the New Orleans Mint building from the Collins manuscript. The room in the back of the center section is called *Machinery Foundation*. On another page this room was identified as the *Room under Coining Room for Springs and Beams*. The six small rooms in the center section have been identified as *Vaults*. The room in the left front in the center section was identified as the *Counting Room* while the room in the right front was called *Shipping & Packing*. The large room in the left wing was called the *Carpenter Shop* while several other rooms were identified as *Store Rooms*. The rooms in the right wing were identified as the *Mill Room*, *Separating Room*, *Coal Room* and *Machine Shop*. On another page the large *Separating Room* was identified as the *Refining Room*, *Test Furnaces*, and *Pounding Apparatus*. The *Coining Room* was on the main floor along with other rooms where daily business activities were conducted at the Mint.

Gray-Carboneau Theory Used in Red Book

When a new theory is introduced it often takes some time before it is generally accepted, especially when it contradicts a theory proposed by another prominent numismatist. The Gray-Carboneau theory for identifying Gobrecht dollars was introduced in three articles that were published in Issues #79, #82 and #87 of the journal. While the authors did not write all of the Gobrecht dollar text for the 2004 Red Book, the Gobrecht Dollar section of this book employs the Gray-Carboneau theory for identifying the original issues dated 1836, 1838 and 1839. The new Red Book also uses their method for describing die alignments and for identifying restrikes.

The authors would also like to report that they are working on a comprehensive Gobrecht Dollar book that will be published in the near future. Any additional information that is received on the publication of this new reference book will be reported in a future issue of the journal.

The Editor



BUYING LIBERTY SEATED COINS SCARCE DATES, VARIETIES OR COLLECTIONS

CALL OR WRITE

BRIAN GREER • LSCC #716

P.O. BOX 3563 • URBANDALE, IOWA 50322

Telephone (515) 331-3534

An 1842-O Half Dollar with a Reverse Partial Brockage

by

Gerald L. Kochel



The Seated half dollar illustrated with this article was obtained from a small collection of “odds and ends” in my home town of Lititz, Pennsylvania. This coin is dated 1842 and it has a hole on the obverse through a reverse partial brockage that has obliterated the design on the upper third of the coin. A few of my local collector friends believed that it could be a home made job with the partial brockage added after the coin left the mint. I was not convinced of this so I took the coin with me to the 2003 ANA summer seminar. I showed it to Mike Ellis, Bill Fivaz and Bob Campbell and they all agreed that it was a genuine reverse partial brockage. The incuse letters TATES OF A are clearly visible up side down and reversed in an arc around the obverse hole. With the wear that this coin received, I would have to believe that it was worn around someone’s neck for an extended period of time. We will never know who this person was but it is interesting to speculate on the journey that this coin took through the middle years of the 19th century. It was tucked away for many years only to eventually resurface and raise questions about why a partial brockage coin would be holed and badly worn.

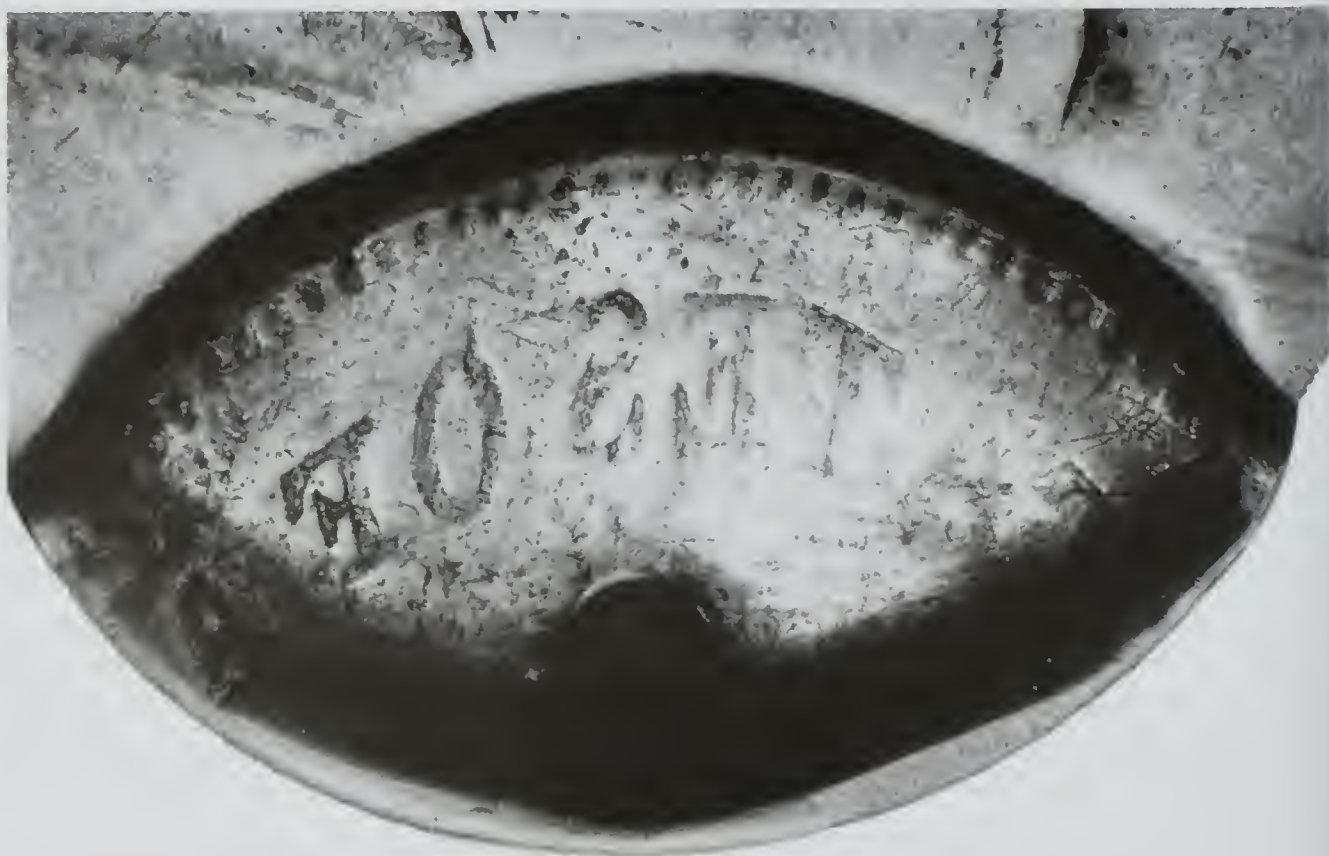
I received additional proof of authenticity for my coin at the ANA Convention in Baltimore in July 2003. Error specialist Ken Hill took one look at it and said, “of course its real.” He also stated that the coin was a partial collar or railroad rim strike. He said that the position of the reed segments along the edge would indicate that the obverse die was the hammer die.

During the convention, Ken Hill, Brian Greer and Dick Osburn examined the coin and studied its die characteristics. The three of them convinced each other that this unusual coin with the reverse partial brockage was an 1842 half dollar from the New



**Edge of Partial Brockage 1842-O Half Dollar with Reed Segments
near Reverse**

Orleans mint. They noted that the coin had the Small Date for this year. This can be determined by the small size of the date digits but also by the fact that the 4 does not have a serif on the end of its crossbar. On Medium Date half dollars of this year, the 4 has a crossbar with a large triangular serif. The reverse of this coin has small letters in the legend UNITED STATES OF AMERICA and in the denomination HALF DOL. This can be determined by the small size of the letters but also by the wide gap between the lettering and the denticles. It is clear that the coin that caused the brockage also had small letters in the legend because of the wide gaps between the incuse letters and the denticles in the brockage area. These are all important features in determining the mint of origin for this partial brockage coin.



Lettering in Reverse Partial Brockage on 1842-0 Small Date Half Dollar

All known 1842-O Small Date half dollars have a Small Letters reverse. Until recently, all known 1842 Small Date half dollars struck at the Philadelphia mint had a Large Letters reverse. Dick Osburn had a high grade 1842-O Small Date half dollar in stock and a comparison showed that its date position was consistent with the date position on my partial brockage coin. All of this evidence indicates that my partial brockage coin is indeed a well worn example of an 1842-O Small Date half dollar.

This analysis was necessary because of the excessive wear on the reverse of my coin opposite the brockage. The impact that produced the brockage pushed the mintmark to the highest point on the coin. The extra wear to that section of the coin has resulted in considerable weakness to the design between the eagle's claws and the denomination near the rim. But if you hold the coin just right, you can see a faint outline of what could be the top of the New Orleans mintmark.

When I first acquired this coin I was somewhat disappointed by its condition and the fact that it had been holed through the brockage. But as time has passed I began to recognize that the unusual features of this coin create an intriguing mystery with many unresolved questions. We will probably never know who owned this coin or how long it was worn as a necklace. It would also be interesting to know how it came into the possession of the individual who used it as a piece of jewelry and why an error coin was chosen for this purpose. But I have two questions whose answers would add more intrigue to the history surrounding this special coin. Can anyone produce a photograph from the 19th century that shows an individual wearing this coin around their neck? And finally, can anyone produce the coin that created the brockage on my coin when it was struck in 1842?

I would like to give special thanks to club members Ken Hill, Brain Greer and Dick Osburn for their expertise in attributing this unusual brockage coin. I would also like to thank Ken Hill for the superb pictures of this interesting piece that raises so many unanswered questions.



LSCC Spring Regional Meeting

LSCC will hold a regional meeting of the club during the Central States Convention at the Midwest Airlines Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The convention will be held from May 7-9, 2004. The club meeting has been scheduled for 9:00AM on Friday May 7, 2004. The location of the meeting will be listed in the convention program.

The purpose of this meeting will be to provide LSCC members with an opportunity to discuss Seated coinage. You might want to use this meeting as an opportunity to show other club members interesting or unusual Seated coins that you have purchased over the years. Plans for future club activities will be discussed. Copies of the four Collective Volumes will be available for review and purchase at the meeting.

The Editor

Some Additional Information on the 1851-O Seated Dollar

I would like to clarify something from Weimar White's article "Comments on the Book, 100 Greatest U.S. Coins" that appeared in Issue #88 of the journal. The author notes that there were two New Orleans mint Liberty Seated coins listed in the book, the 1853-O No Arrows half dollar and the 1851-O Seated dollar. While the half dollar was certainly struck in New Orleans, experts believe that the dollar is a **Philadelphia** mint product. There are two theories on how it was made.

The late Walter Breen believed that the mintmark on a New Orleans reverse die was partially effaced before this die was used with the restrike 1851 dollar obverse to produce this coin during the 1859-1860 period. Ira and Larry Goldberg used this theory in cataloging the coin for their auction of the Dr. Jon Kardatzke Collection in February 2000. After examining the coin, I came to a different conclusion, as did the graders at PCGS. I believe that the O mintmark is very weak because the coin was overstruck on a New Orleans Seated dollar. The mintmark would have been flattened in the striking process. I believe that the host coin was an 1859-O dollar with its obverse planed off before striking. In theory, the host coin could have been an 1846-O, 1850-O, 1859-O or 1860-O dollar. But the mintmark position is different on the 1846-O dollar and Walter Breen concluded that it was an 1859-O die and not an 1860-O die that had its mintmark effaced. I therefore believe that the host coin was an 1859-O dollar with a slight possibility that it was an 1850-O coin.

When the coin was sold again in the Goldberg auction of September 2003, both theories were discussed in depth by the cataloger. Interested collectors should refer to the description of Lot #535 from the Pre-Long Beach Auction of September 15-17, 2003 by Ira and Larry Goldberg. The cataloger points out that part of the date on the host coin should be present if indeed the coin was overstruck on an 1850-O or 1859-O dollar. As noted above, I believe there is another possibility that explains why there is no evidence of a host date. The coin weighs 400.3 grams, more than 12 grams below the normal weight of 412.5 grams. This lighter weight could indicate that the obverse of the host coin was planed off before striking to produce a better obverse strike. The reverse die on this coin also appears to be the same as that used for the other restrike 1851 dollars! But there is no evidence of a faint New Orleans mintmark on any of the other 1851 restrike dollars. If this coin has the same reverse, we must conclude that it was struck over a New Orleans mint dollar. The cataloger in the recent Goldberg sale correctly notes that the mintmark on the coin was not carefully chiseled off. The mintmark is squashed, not removed, thus leading to my conclusion that it existed on the host coin.

Whichever theory is correct, this is an amazing coin! However, it really should be listed as a Philadelphia mint product, since there is no doubt as to where this super rarity was struck.

John Dannreuther
LSCC #1305

An 1876-S Half Dollar with a Repunched Date

by

Mike Stettenbenz



I have been a collector for twenty years and have always enjoyed doing research on new coins that I have added to my collection. This past winter I purchased a lot containing several coins that included a high grade 1876-S half dollar. This coin really caught my eye because it had a very nice strike and appeared to be in uncirculated condition. I was anxious to study this beautiful coin in some detail so that I could identify any interesting or unusual features that might appear on its surfaces.

Within a few weeks of this purchase I set up my microscope and began to carefully study the obverse of my coin. While studying the date I noticed the remains of an extra digit within the lower loop of the 6. This was a triangular shaped segment that narrows to a point as it runs from left to right within the lower loop of this digit. Further examination revealed a series of die lines that run at a diagonal through the field and up into the 87 in the date. I turned the coin over and noticed that there was some recutting on the s mintmark that is located high in the field over the F in HALF near the branch stem and feather tip.

My initial examination had revealed more than I would have expected. In just a short period of time I had been able to identify several important features that provided me with the information necessary to conduct further research on this coin. I was excited about what I had discovered and anxious to find out what information might be available on this interesting variety.

After discovering the repunched date on my coin I searched through back issues of the journal but could find no reference to an 1876-S half dollar with a repunched date. In May 2003 I contacted half dollar specialist Dick Osburn and showed him my new discovery at the Central States Convention in St. Louis. He studied it for a while

and then indicated that he had never seen one like it. He said that there appeared to be evidence of repunching within the lower loop of the 6 and recommended that I contact Randy Wiley, one of the authors of a reference book on the Seated half dollar series who had information on all of the known die marriages for this date.

I examined the Wiley-Bugert guide to the Seated half dollar series but found no reference to an 1876-S half dollar with a repunched date. I then contacted Randy Wiley who examined the coin and told me that I had not only discovered a new variety with a repunched date but that its date was positioned further to the right. This was exciting news because the date position could now be used to quickly locate other examples of this die marriage in lower grades that might be difficult to identify from the recutting in the date.

A technical report by Randy Wiley on the die characteristics of this new 1876-S die marriage is as follows: I do not consider this to be an overdate and have recorded it in my database as a Recut 6 with the bottom of the first 6 showing inside the circle of the final 6. A straight line extending up along the right side of the 1 in the date would intersect the obverse shield between the 1st and 2nd vertical stripes in the three stripe group immediately to the right of the shield point. This is further to the right than the measurement recorded for the other 28 obverses in my database with only two others approaching this position. There is a file line extending out from the bottom left of the 8 in the date to a position below the base of the 1. The reverse die was prepared from a Type 1 hub and it has a very small s mintmark. The s mintmark may have been slightly recut but it is not worthy of a recut s designation. The collar has 148 reeds, not particularly significant since I show nine other die marriages of this date with the same collar.

Christian Gobrecht is my favorite designer and Seated coins have always had a special place in my heart. I enjoy studying coins with this beautiful design and I believe that there is still plenty of opportunity for new discoveries within the Seated series. I feel very fortunate to have identified a new variety with a recut date and this experience has only heightened my interest in pursuing additional research on



1876-S Half Dollar with Repunched Date

Seated coins. I would expect that the information presented in this article will lead to the identification of other examples of this die marriage, but only time will determine how rare it will be among coins of this date.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Tom Mulvaney for taking the beautiful pictures of my 1876-S half dollar that have appeared with this article. I would also like to thank Dick Osburn, Randy Wiley and Q. David Bowers for their assistance and support in gathering the information that has been presented on this new variety.



Photographs for Journal Articles

In Issue #88 of the journal Tom Mulvaney announced that he would no longer be available to take photographs for journal articles due to the demands of his new job with Bowers & Merena. I have therefore offered my assistance in performing this important service for club authors.

There will be no charge for photographs that will be used in conjunction with an article that is to appear in the journal, but a copy of the article must accompany the request for pictures. Your only cost would be for postage and insurance when the coins are returned to you. Unless I am out of town, I will have the photographs and coins back in the mail to you within 48 hours of receipt. All work is guaranteed, you must be satisfied with the photographs or I will shoot them again.

When sending coins, please be very specific on exactly what areas of a coin you want shown in the pictures. Close up pictures can be very helpful in identifying a new variety but I don't want to guess as to what you consider important. Please let me know if you would like arrows added at a specific location to highlight a critical feature.

I would also be glad to take photographs of coins for club members who are not planning to use them in an article. My fee for this service is \$5 per shot plus postage and insurance for return of the coins. Again, all work is guaranteed.

Checks for all services can be made out to me. I can be reached by regular mail as follows: Bill Fivaz, P.O. Box 888660, Dunwoody, GA 30356-0660. I can be reached by telephone or FAX at: (770) 396-6125. If I am not there to answer the telephone, the line automatically kicks over to the FAX machine. In that case you can leave a message on the FAX machine or call again. I will return your call if I can pick up your number on my caller ID. I can also be reached by e-mail at: feev@webtv.net.

I hope that my service will continue to provide club members with an opportunity to have photographs available to illustrate their articles in the journal.

Bill Fivaz
LSCC #252

Measuring the Quality of a Seated Dollar Collection

The quality of a Seated collection is usually measured by averaging together the numerical grades for each of the coins in the set. However, this procedure fails to take rarity of the individual coins into consideration when it measures set quality. For a collection of Seated dollars, the addition of an 1873-CC dollar in VF-30 should increase the quality of the set but its purchase might just decrease the average grade of the coins. This rare branch mint coin has a far greater value in VF than most of the other dates in AU. This difference in rarity should be reflected by a measure of set quality.

I would like to propose a system that considers rarity when calculating a measure of set quality. Rarity will be measured by value in the market place. Coin Values are published monthly by Coin World and therefore available to most collectors. I would propose that a collector determine the highest numerical grade for each date he owns in the Seated dollar set, and then convert each of these grades to a listed price from the latest release of Coin Values. A measure of quality for the set can then be determined as follows:

$$\text{SCORE} = \text{Total of the Listed Prices from Coin Values} / 1000$$

A set will be defined to consist of 45 coins. This set would contain the 34 Philadelphia coins from 1840 to 1873, the 4 New Orleans coins, the 3 San Francisco coins and the 4 Carson City coins. A grade for each coin in the set would be determined and converted to its listed price from Coin Values. A SCORE for the set can then be calculated as shown above. As a point of reference, consider a set of 42 coins without the 1851, 1852 and 1870-S rarities. With 39 coins grading AU-50 and the three rare Carson City coins grading about XF-40, the set would receive a SCORE of about 100. The addition of one or more of the three rarities would produce a significant jump in the SCORE for the set. This would seem to be appropriate because the presence of any of the rarities would certainly increase the completeness and quality of a Seated dollar collection.

The SCORE is not calculated to place a value on the set but is intended to provide a tool to effectively compare the quality and completeness of existing Seated dollar collections. It is helpful for collectors to know how their set compares to others that are being assembled in the current market. While average grade has been used to measure quality in the past, I believe that I have developed a procedure that appropriately considers rarity when making this calculation. I am prepared to gather information on existing Seated dollar collections and to calculate the SCORE for any set that has been properly described by its owner. To participate a collector need only send me a list of dates and the numerical grade for the best coin of each date in the collection. Each collection will be assigned a set number. A collector will be given his set number and SCORE upon request. The set number and SCORE will be published in the journal for the comparison of sets, but no other information on the individual sets will be published.

An individual need not identify himself to participate in the study. Mail can be sent to a post office box or all communications can take place over the Internet. I will be the only person who will have access to the information provided and the only person who will evaluate the collection using this new measure of set quality.

To participate in the study, an individual must provide a listing of each date in the series along with a numerical grade for the best coin of each date. Guidelines for participation in the study are as follows:

1. For certified coins, list the grade given on the slab of each coin. For uncertified coins, give your best estimate for the grade of each coin. No points will be deducted for uncertified coins.
2. For certified coins with different obverse and reverse grades, use the lower of the two grades for that coin.
3. Cleaned coins should be assigned a grade 10 points lower than their details grade. For example, an 1849 XF-40 cleaned coin should be reported as VF-30.
4. ANACS *net* grades should be used for damaged coins that have been certified.
5. Identify any proof coins in the set so that they can be properly evaluated in Coin Values.
6. A minimum of 20 different dates is needed for the collection to be considered a set. For example, the 4 Carson City dates in nice grades would make an attractive collection but they would not be scored as a Seated dollar set.
7. Coin Values are published monthly in Coin World and will be used to determine the value of each coin in the collection. The SCORE that is calculated for the set will reflect a combination of grade, rarity and completeness.
8. The set numbers along with their scores will be published in a future issue of the journal. The scores will provide collectors with a better understanding of quality and completeness for existing sets in the current market.

Collectors can send me a list of dates and grades for their Seated dollar set as follows: Dennis Garstang, 1028 S. Bishop Ave #204, Rolla, Missouri 65401. I can also be reached by telephone at (573) 364-5095 or by e-mail at dgarstang@webtv.net.

Dennis Garstang
LSCC #481



1851 Original Dollar

New Information on the 1840-O With Drapery Half Dime

by

Mark Sheldon



During the summer of 2003 I purchased a nice AU-55 example of the rare 1840-O With Drapery half dime while attending the ANA Convention in Baltimore. I quickly identified this coin was an example of the V-5 die marriage with the reverse die crack that runs from the right stem to the rim. This coin has a reverse that was first paired with a No Drapery obverse creating the even more elusive 1840-O transitional half dime. A detailed analysis of 1840-O With Drapery half dimes can be found in an article by William Harmon that was published in Issue #45 of the journal. This article was later reprinted in Collective Volume Number Three.

Many of the 1840-O With Drapery half dimes were weakly struck and this issue is exceedingly rare in grades above XF. The coin that I purchased is not only a Choice AU specimen, it is also sharply struck and an early die state example of the V-5 variety. Upon closer examination, I was surprised to discover that my coin also had a repunched date.

The repunching in the date shows above the flag of the 1 and along the bottom of the 0. The date was originally punched into the die at a slight downward angle from left to right and then corrected. The final punching was nearly level with the remains of the earlier punch clearly visible across the top of the 1 in the final date.

The early pictures that I took of this coin did not turn out very well because of the dark toning on the surfaces of the coin. I therefore took the pictures that appear with this article at a slight angle to get more light on the surface of the coin. This may have caused a slight distortion in the design but the quality of this coin is better illustrated using this revised technique.

This example shows that new information can still be found on even the rarest dates in the Seated half dime series. Keep your eyes open to new possibilities, you just never know what you might find.



1840-O V-5 Half Dime with Repunched Date



1840-O V-5 Half Dime with Reverse Die Crack from Right Stem to Rim

An Analysis for Carson City Seated Dollar Sets

by

John W. McCloskey

Leonard Augsburger and Darrell Low presented an extensive study of auction appearances for Liberty Seated coinage in Issues #85 to #88 of the journal. I believe that this study contains a lot of valuable information for collectors because it provides a summary of important Seated collections and identifies many of the finest known examples of Seated coinage. However I feel that these records contain additional information on Seated coinage that could be very helpful to collectors in evaluating future purchases. This article has therefore been prepared to demonstrate the type of analysis that can be performed on specialized segments of these auction records.

The auction records for 109 sets of Seated dollars were published last summer in Issue #87 of the journal. In November 2003 I asked Leonard Augsburger to provide me with a list of the auctions that contained coins for two or more of the Carson City dates. I also asked him to provide me with the highest grade for each of the Carson City dates that appeared in these auctions. I then personally examined the catalogues for auctions conducted during the past year and added this information to the listing provided by Augsburger. This data is given in Table 1. It provides a comprehensive listing for the sets of Carson City Seated dollars that have been offered at auction during the past 19 years.

Table 1
Grades for Sets of Carson City Seated Dollars at Auction
Numerical Grade of Best Coin in Sale

Date	Sale	1870-CC	1871-CC	1872-CC	1873-CC
JUN 1986	Stack's US	12	12	2	12
MAR 1987	Stack's US	40	20	40	30
APR 1987	Stack's Snyder	50	8	20	40
SEP 1987	Stack's Ruder	50	20	40	-
NOV 1987	Krueger Hansen	45	-	40	-
JUN 1988	Stack's Sprinkle	40	20	40	12
NOV 1988	Bowers Norweb III	50	63	60	60
JAN 1989	Stack's French	65	40	50	50
JAN 1989	Bowers Johnson	20	8	50	8
MAY 1989	Superior Casterline	50	40	12	15
JUN 1989	Stack's Southern	50	30	30	20
AUG 1989	Bowers Aspen	40	-	40	-
JAN 1990	Bowers Gore	12	-	45	58
MAR 1990	Bowers Boyd	-	58	50	-
MAY 1990	Stack's New York	20	4	15	12
JAN 1991	Bowers Greenwich	-	40	61	-
MAR 1991	Stack's Charlotte	8	8	8	4
JUN 1991	Bowers Polis	8	12	20	-
MAY 1992	Stack's Willett	40	-	8	-
MAY 1992	Superior Adams	20	40	63	40

Date	Sale	1870-CC	1871-CC	1872-CC	1873-CC
SEP 1992	Bowers Witham	50	20	55	-
SEP 1992	Stack's US	45	-	40	-
MAY 1993	Bowers Stetson	30	55	8	-
SEP 1993	Bowers Tower Hill	30	40	45	12
JAN 1994	Bowers Lexington	45	-	62	-
MAY 1994	Bowers Burke	63	45	20	7
SEP 1994	Bowers Salisbury	40	12	50	30
JAN 1995	Bowers Perry	58	-	6	-
MAR 1995	Stack's Stack	60	63	63	45
JAN 1996	Bowers Shahbadian	50	-	30	-
AUG 1996	Bowers Rarities	53	61	58	30
SEP 1996	Bowers Burhop	45	-	45	-
SEP 1996	Superior Steinberg	30	-	8	-
FEB 1997	Superior Gainsborough	55	58	58	55
APR 1997	Bowers Eliasberg	62	58	61	58
MAY 1997	Bowers Rossi	20	-	20	-
JUN 1997	Superior Heathgate	60	5	40	8
JUL 1997	Bowers Rarities	63	45	-	-
SEP 1997	Superior Carmel	40	12	45	20
MAY 1998	Akers Pittman	55	-	20	-
AUG 1998	Heritage ANA	62	53	40	40
SEP 1998	Bowers Torok	61	63	62	60
JAN 1999	Bowers Rarities	53	55	62	50
FEB 2000	Goldberg Kardatzke	50	53	50	50
AUG 2000	Bowers ANA	45	-	10	-
OCT 2000	Bowers Schwan	40	40	50	40
SEP 2001	Stack's Vermeule	12	2	12	-
NOV 2001	Bowers Wong	63	-	60	-
MAR 2002	Bowers Rich	40	40	55	40
APR 2002	Heritage Silverman	63	50	58	53
JUL 2002	Heritage New York	55	-	55	50
AUG 2002	Superior ANA	50	40	45	-
NOV 2002	Bowers Steinberg	40	-	-	53
JAN 2003	Heritage FUN	53	30	8	53
JAN 2003	Superior Elite	40	53	40	25
FEB 2003	Heritage Long Beach	58	53	-	-
MAR 2003	Bowers Youngman	45	25	-	50
MAY 2003	Stack's Rudolf	63	64	60	55
MAY 2003	Heritage Central States	30	-	12	12
MAY 2003	Superior Long Beach	58	53	-	50
JUL 2003	Heritage Baltimore	55	40	58	55
DEC 2003	Bowers Rindge	-	-	40	12
JAN 2004	Heritage FUN	55	30	45	-
JAN 2004	Stack's Gregg	50	40	50	-
JAN 2004	Superior Pre Long Beach	63	55	53	50
JAN 2004	Heritage Long Beach	45	12	8	-

The listing in Table 1 does not include all of the Carson City Seated dollars that were available at auction during these years. A set was defined to be at least two of the Carson City dates so that no tabulation is provided for those auctions that included coins from only one of the four issues. Furthermore, many auctions contained duplicate examples of these dates that have not been included in the listing. The table records only the highest grade for each date in the Carson City set so that the relative availability of the dates by grade can be studied.

Table 2 gives the grade distribution for the Carson City dollar sets in Table 1. This tabulation contains data only from the 66 sales that included at least two Carson City dates. The date totals show that this generally meant that the 1870-CC and 1872-CC dollars were included in the sale. When one of the four dates was missing, it was most often the 1873-CC dollar with only 40 appearances in the 66 sets. Most of the coins in these sets were in grades of VF-20 or higher, indicating that all four dates were available in these grades on a regular basis.

Table 2
Grade Distribution for 66 Sets of Carson City Seated Dollars

Date	G-VG 4-10	FINE 12-15	VF 20-35	XF 40-45	AU 50-58	UNC 60+	Total
1870-CC	2	3	8	17	21	12	63
1871-CC	6	5	8	12	12	5	48
1872-CC	9	4	7	16	15	10	61
1873-CC	4	7	6	6	15	2	40

The grade distributions show that all Carson City Seated dollars are rare in mint state and that the 1871-CC and 1873-CC dollars are extremely rare in these grades. Due to the general rarity of Seated dollars in uncirculated condition, most collectors of the series concentrate on obtaining nice attractive coins in grades from XF to AU. The data in Table 2 show that 1871-CC and 1873-CC dollars appeared in grades from XF to AU at least 20 times while 1870-CC and 1872-CC dollars appeared in these grades at least 30 times. The collector would therefore have a reasonable opportunity to acquire all four dates in nice circulated grades.

Exactly half of the 66 sets of Carson City dollars listed in Table 1 contained examples of all four dates. A study of this data will show that not every collector was trying to buy the best available example of each date in the series. Either because of financial constraints or a desire to match the condition of other coins, a collector will choose a grade level and then attempt to find the best piece at that grade. Table 3 compares the grades of the four dates within each set to establish a relative rarity among the dates. This table shows the number of times that each date appeared in the highest or lowest grade within the 33 four coin sets. The fractions occur because of ties within a set for the highest or lowest grade. The table shows that the 1870-CC and 1872-CC dollars most often appeared in the highest grade within a set. It also shows that the 1873-CC dollar never appeared in the highest grade in any of the 33 four coin sets. The 0.83 figure was obtained from one three way tie for the highest grade and another two way tie. On the other hand, the 1873-CC dollar appeared in the lowest grade 12 times and it was tied for the lowest grade another 7 times in the 33 sets. This information supports the opinion that the 1873-CC dollar is the rarest and the most difficult to acquire of the four Carson City Seated coins.

Table 3
Four Coin Carson City Seated Dollar Sets

Highest Grade		Lowest Grade	
Date	Frequency	Date	Frequency
1870-CC	13.17	1870-CC	3.50
1871-CC	7.67	1871-CC	10.67
1872-CC	11.33	1872-CC	3.83
1873-CC	0.83	1873-CC	15.00
Total	<u>33.00</u>	Total	<u>33.00</u>

Since only half of the 66 sets contained examples of all four dates, I decided to make a paired comparison of the grades within each set. For each pair of coins in a set, a count of 1 was recorded for the date with the higher grade for that pair. When the grades were identical for the pair, the count was split between the two dates. The results of this tabulation are given in Table 4. The table shows that the 1870-CC and 1872-CC dollars appeared together in the same set 58 times. The 1870-CC dollar appeared in the higher grade 29 times and it was tied for the higher grade 11 more times for a total count of 34.5. One may have expected the 1870-CC dollar to appear in the higher grade more often since it is not nearly as rare as the 1872-CC dollar. However, this data indicates that the 1872-CC dollar is available often enough for the collector to have a good opportunity to acquire a piece in the desired grade. The table also shows that the 1873-CC dollar is only occasionally offered in a higher grade when compared to the 1870-CC and 1872-CC dollars but more often in a higher grade when compared to the 1871-CC dollar. This data again supports the position that the 1873-CC dollar is the most difficult of the four dates to acquire in the series.

Table 4
Paired Comparison by Grade
Higher Grade in Set

Date	Frequency	Date	Frequency	Total
1870-CC	30.5	1871-CC	14.5	45
1870-CC	34.5	1872-CC	23.5	58
1870-CC	30.5	1873-CC	8.5	39
1871-CC	17.0	1872-CC	27.0	44
1871-CC	21.0	1873-CC	14.0	35
1872-CC	29.5	1873-CC	7.5	37

Table 5 examines the coins by grade level and records the number of sets with 0 to 4 coins at each grade level. The extreme rarity of these Carson City dollars in mint state makes it very difficult to acquire multiple dates in mint state grades. Only one of the 66 sets had all four dates in mint state. This was the Sonnheim collection that

was sold in the Bowers Torok sale of September 1998. This collection was the only one sold with all four dates in certified mint state grades. Assembling a collection in these grades is limited by the extreme rarity of the 1871-CC and 1873-CC dollars in mint state.

Table 5
Number of Carson City Seated Dollar Sets at Grade Level
Number of Coins in Set at Grade Level

Grade Level	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
MS-60 or higher	48	12	2	3	1
AU-50 or higher	20	24	7	6	9
XF-40 or higher	8	10	26	7	15
VF-20 or higher	3	9	18	16	20

The Carson City dates are so rare in uncirculated grades that 48 of the 66 sets had no coins in mint state and only 6 sets had more than one coin in mint state. In addition to the Sonnenheim collection, there were three sets that contained three of the dates in mint state. The most recently offered of these sets was from the Rudolf collection that was sold by Stack's in May 2003. This set had the 1870-CC, 1871-CC and 1872-CC dollars in mint state with the 1873-CC dollar appearing in AU-55. The James A. Stack collection was sold by Stack's in March 1995 and contained three mint state coins with the 1873-CC dollar appearing in XF-45. The only other set with three mint state coins was from the Norweb collection that was sold by Bowers in November 1988. Surprisingly, the only circulated coin in this set was the 1870-CC dollar that appeared in AU-50.

While mint state sets of Carson City Seated dollars are difficult to assemble, the table shows that these coins are available in the higher circulated grades. There were 9 sets available at auction with all four coins in grades of AU or higher and 15 sets with all four coins in grades of XF or higher. While they may be expensive, the data show that a collector would have an opportunity to purchase nice XF to AU examples of these four early Carson City dollars.

This analysis shows that the 1873-CC dollar is the rarest of the four Carson City dates followed by the 1871-CC dollar, the 1872-CC dollar and the 1870-CC dollar. This order of rarity is consistent with the information provided by Greg Shishmanian and Dennis Garstang in their article on the Seated dollar series in Issue #85 of the journal. This rarity ranking is also consistent with the studies previously published by John Kroon and Weimar White on these rare Carson City dollars.

The records show that more Carson City dollars have been offered at auction in recent years. Table 6 lists the number of auctions that have included coins from Carson City sets in five year intervals. The frequency of appearance continues to increase and the latest five year period doesn't even include a complete tabulation for 2004. While Carson City dollars are considered to be rare and desirable additions to a set of Seated dollars, the records show that they are available on a regular basis to the interested collector.

Table 6
Frequency of Appearance for Carson City Dollars in Sets

Years	Date			
	1870-CC	1871-CC	1872-CC	1873-CC
1985 – 1989	12	10	12	9
1990 – 1994	13	11	15	7
1995 – 1999	16	10	15	9
2000 – 2004	22	17	19	15



The 1871-CC dollar was listed four times in grades of Choice Brilliant Uncirculated in Table 1. However it should be noted that these appearances represent only two different coins. The 1871-CC dollar illustrated above was described as Choice Brilliant Uncirculated when it was sold by Stack's in the James A. Stack sale in March 1995. The same coin was described as Very Choice Brilliant Uncirculated when it was sold by Stack's in the Rudolf sale in May 2003.

The Norweb coin was described as MS-63 prooflike when it was sold by Bowers in November 1988. This coin was later certified as NGC MS-63. The same coin had been certified as PCGS MS-63 when it was sold by Bowers in the Sonnheim collection in September 1998.

The 1875-CC Dime

by

Weimar W. White

Collectors of Carson City coins have always been interested in the two mintmark varieties of the 1875-CC dime. Coins of this year have received extra attention because this is the only date in the series that was struck with the CC mintmark both in the wreath and below the wreath. Even though there are two popular varieties for this date, collectors should be able to acquire nice examples of each variety at reasonable prices because of a relatively high mintage of 4,645,000 for this issue.

An example of the 1875-CC dime in MS-60 with the mintmark in the wreath can be acquired today for around \$160. Brian Greer has listed this variety as an R-3+ coin in mint state in his book on the Seated dime series. However, one could expect to pay about \$235 for an 1875-CC dime in MS-60 with the mintmark below the wreath. Greer has listed this variety as an R-5 rarity in mint state.

As the grade increases, one can expect to pay much more for examples of these varieties. An 1875-CC dime in MS-65 with the mintmark in the wreath would be worth about \$2750 while an example in this grade with the mintmark below the wreath would be worth about \$3000. Regardless of which variety is the more difficult to obtain, the value of these varieties has appreciated rather well since they were minted 129 years ago.

Assume that your great grandfather saved an 1875-CC dime with the mintmark in the wreath in MS-60 during the year it was struck. Suppose that this coin has been passed down through the generations and that you now own it. As such, this coin has experienced an average gain of 5.89% per year in price appreciation. By comparison,



1875-CC Dime in UNC-60 with Mintmark in the Wreath

the variety with the mintmark below the wreath in MS-60 has experienced an average annual increase of 6.20% in nominal dollar value over the past 129 years.

According to the David Akers catalog, John J. Pittman purchased his Very Choice Uncirculated 1875-CC dime with the mintmark in the wreath from Barney Bluestone for \$2.25 in 1948. In his new book on the Carson City Mint, Rusty Goe has reported that this coin is now in an NGC MS-66 holder and that it was valued at \$4500 in 2003. This corresponds to an average annual appreciation rate of 14.82% over this 55 year period.

Carson City coins are very popular and collectors have always been attracted to these pieces with the little cc mintmarks. The coin showcased in this article is a brilliant UNC-60 example of the 1875-CC dime with the mintmark in the wreath. This coin has been precisely weighed at 2.5176 grams, a figure that can be used as an identifier for this specimen.



LARGE PRICE LIST LIBERTY SEATED COINS ALL DENOMINATIONS

CALL OR WRITE

BRIAN GREER • LSCC #716

P.O. BOX 3563

URBANDALE, IOWA 50322

Telephone (515) 331-3534

Collective Volumes Available

In order to make the information in the early issues of the Gobrecht Journal available to all LSCC members, the club has chosen to reprint the articles in these issues in hard bound collective volumes. There have been four collective volumes printed to date, each containing the material printed in the journal over a period of five years. The articles in these collective volumes have been ordered by denomination and date to make it easier for the reader to locate a specific article from a past issue. The first section contains articles of general interest that cut across denominations. Subsequent sections contain information on specific denominations starting with half dimes and progressing through to dollars. These volumes contain many original articles on Seated coinage not available in any other numismatic books currently on the market. The collective volumes contain original research on the silver Liberty Seated coinage from the 19th century. Each book is attractively bound with a hard cover in a 7 by 10 inch format. All prices include postage.

COLLECTIVE VOLUME NUMBER ONE

This volume contains the material published in the first 18 issues that were released between December 1974 and July 1980. This volume contains almost 390 pages of material on Seated coinage. Price: \$29 per copy.

COLLECTIVE VOLUME NUMBER TWO

This volume contains the material published in Issues #19 to #33 that were released between November 1980 and July 1985. This volume contains 380 pages of material on Seated coinage. Price: \$29 per copy.

COLLECTIVE VOLUME NUMBER THREE

This volume contains the material published in Issues #34 to #48 that were released between November 1985 and July 1990. This volume contains 470 pages of material on Seated coinage. Price: \$34 per copy.

COLLECTIVE VOLUME NUMBER FOUR

This volume contains the material published in Issues #49 to #63 that were released between November 1990 and July 1995. This volume contains 580 pages of material on Seated coinage. Price: \$44 per copy.

COLLECTIVE VOLUME NUMBER FIVE

Work is currently being done to prepare this new collective volume for publication. It is not yet available for purchase but progress is being made in sorting the articles and establishing the format for this new volume.

Make all checks payable to LSCC and send to:

John McCloskey, President LSCC
5718 King Arthur Dr.
Kettering, Ohio 45429

Recollections of a Seated Quarter Collector

by

John W. McCloskey

I began collecting Seated coinage in 1955 because I was fascinated by the sharp lines in the obverse design and attracted to the beauty of these 19th century coins. After working on a Seated dime set for fifteen years I started collecting Seated quarters in 1970. I was particularly attracted to this series because of the long run of low mintage rarities that it contained. I realized that it would take a long time to find nice examples of the rare dates in the series but I knew that I would have a valuable collection of beautiful coins when it was completed.

There were no dealers who specialized in Liberty Seated coinage when I began to purchase coins for my quarter collection. Most dealers stocked Seated coinage but they made no effort to acquire coins of specific dates. Dealers would usually have high grade examples of the common Philadelphia mint issues and a few worn examples of the relatively common branch mint issues but they seldom stocked the rare dates in any grade. I was able to purchase nice examples of about half of the Seated quarters within two years but I found it difficult to add many of the rarities to my collection. By 1974 however more people were buying Seated quarters and some dealers even began to search out the rare dates for interested collectors. Building a set was still a slow process but the rare dates began to appear with an increase in prices and greater demand from collectors. My set was finally completed in 1981 with the purchase of an 1871-CC quarter in a nice VF-30 grade.

My objective in building the set was to obtain an example of each date in an XF grade and then add any interesting die varieties that might be available. Weekend coin shows were very popular during the 1970s and the interested collector could find a show to attend almost any weekend. I was able to acquire examples of most of the Philadelphia mint issues within three years since most of them are rather common and they were frequently available. Only a few of these dates proved to be difficult to obtain. The 1853/2 No Arrows quarter had long been recognized as a rarity in the series and this date was just not available in any grade. The 1958 Red Book actually listed it at a higher price than the 1849-O quarter in circulated grades. Examples of the 1853/2 No Arrows quarter were considered prized rarities at this time and kept off the market by knowledgeable collectors. But even the rarest of dates will appear from time to time and I was eventually able to find a piece in a nice XF grade for my set. The 1866 quarter is another Philadelphia date that proved difficult to obtain in circulated grades. It took me four years to find a nice XF example of this date. The low mintage Philadelphia mint issues from 1879 to 1890 were frequently available in uncirculated and proof condition during the 1970s. They were popular with collectors because they were rare dates that could be purchased in high grades for a modest price. These dates were much more difficult to obtain in circulated condition and the collector was fortunate to be able to acquire any of them in grades from VF to XF. I found the 1879 and 1880 quarters to be the most frequently available in circulated grades while the 1886 and 1887 quarters were the most difficult to obtain.

Most of the New Orleans dates were available in average circulated condition but they became very difficult to find in the higher grades. New Orleans quarters circulated freely in the South before the Civil War making high grade examples more

difficult to obtain. The 1849-O, 1851-O and 1852-O quarters were particularly difficult to find during the 1970s and seldom seen in any grade. The 1849-O quarter was a mysterious coin at this time because no mintage figure was given for this date in the Red Book. Few dealers at that time had ever seen one and they weren't even interested in stocking such an expensive coin that would have limited demand from collectors. The 1854-O, 1856-O and 1857-O quarters were readily available in average circulated condition but difficult to obtain in grades approaching mint state. I remember having no trouble finding an 1854-O quarter in GOOD condition but it took me many months to find one in an AU grade.

The most underrated New Orleans coin at this time had to be the 1842-O Small Date quarter. I remember attending shows for a period of four years without even seeing one in any grade. As recently as 1965 the Red Book listed this date at \$18 in VG, \$27.50 in VF and \$90 in uncirculated. These prices certainly would not encourage the owners of any 1842-O Small Date quarters to sell them. I therefore knew that whenever I found an example of this date in any grade I would have to buy it. But modest price increases by 1975 did bring out a few examples of this rare date. I remember buying the first example of this rarity that I had ever seen only a few seconds after examining it. I didn't want to give the dealer any time to change his mind about offering the coin for sale. The purchase price was \$35 for a coin in a nice VF grade. Shortly thereafter I was able to buy another example for \$22 in VG. But one of the great prizes in my collection is an example of this date that turned up a few months later. This was an 1842-O Small Date quarter in an AU-58 grade that I purchased for \$260 at a local coin show. These are extremely low prices by today's standards but it wasn't too many years ago that most of the rare dates in the series were ignored by the collectors of the period.



High Grade 1842-O Small Date Quarter

Another interesting story concerns the very rare 1849-O quarter. This date is very seldom available and one of the key dates in the entire Seated quarter series. I remember that about twenty years ago I was sent an 1849-O quarter to examine and authenticate. The coin was in a nice XF grade but after a quick examination it was obvious that the mintmark had been retooled and that it had been built up in the reverse field below the eagle. I was about ready to send the piece back indicating that it was a counterfeit with an added mintmark but I decided to give more specific details explaining my conclusion. It was a good thing that I decided to study the coin further! I soon discovered that the coin was indeed a genuine 1849-O quarter but that it had a reconstructed mintmark. This conclusion could be reached by examining the characteristics of the obverse die. The date was positioned correctly for a genuine 1849-O quarter and the obverse had the proper die defects for this date and the appropriate doubling around many of the obverse stars. I therefore wrote a letter indicating that the piece was a genuine 1849-O quarter.

I told this story to some collectors a few months later and one of them indicated that he had seen a high grade 1849-O quarter that had been holed through the head on the obverse and through the mintmark on the reverse. All that remained from the original mintmark on the reverse was a very narrow crescent around the top third of the hole. We shared other information on the piece and it became clear that we had both seen the same coin, but I had seen it after the hole had been plugged and the mintmark reconstructed on the reverse. I have always wondered where that coin is today and whether the letter of authentication that I wrote is still kept with the piece.

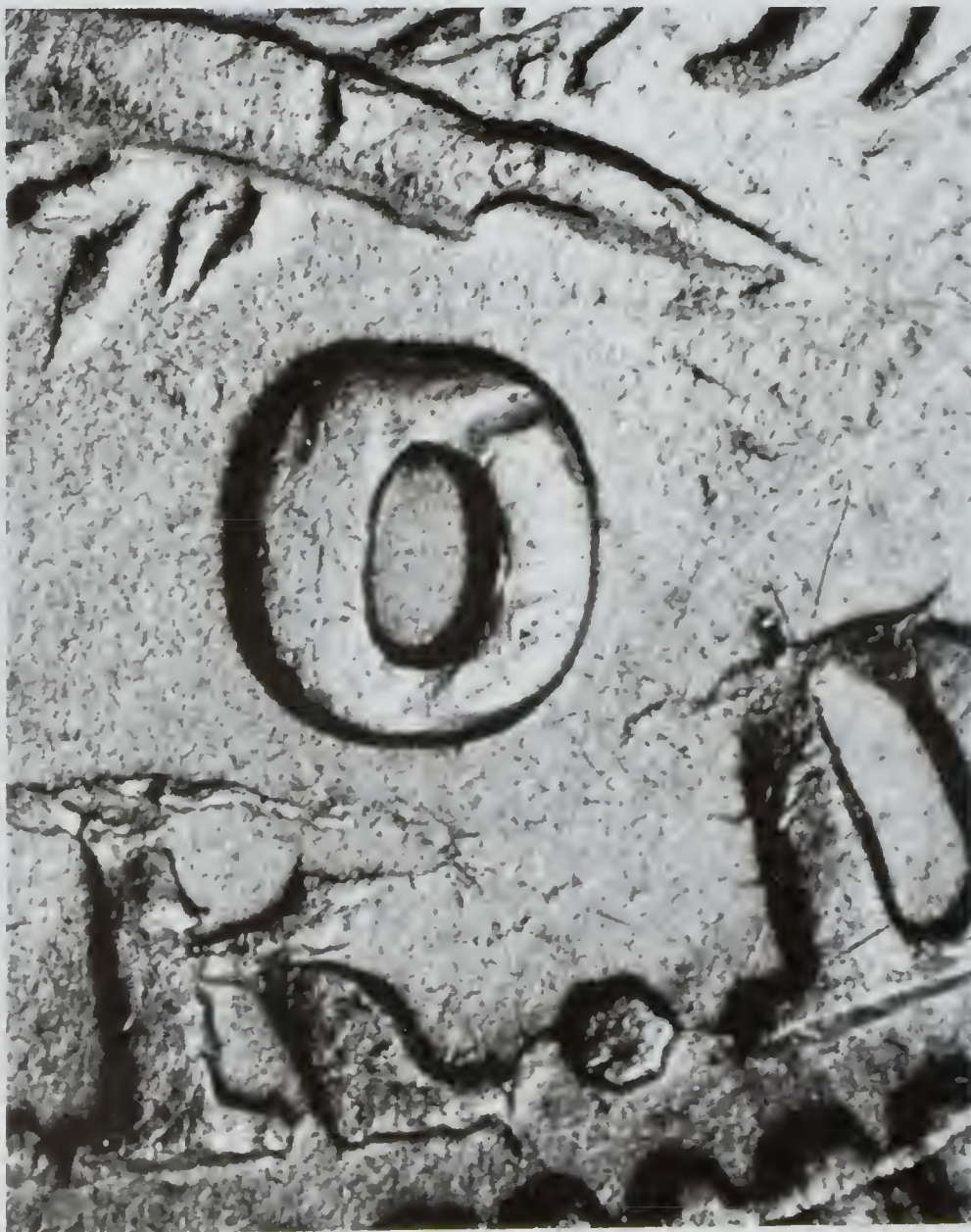
Very few die varieties were known in the Seated quarter series during the 1970s and most collectors had very little interest in studying them. I therefore decided to search out interesting Seated quarter varieties as I added more coins to my collection. After all, dates with the higher mintages were more readily available to study while searching for new varieties in the series. In 1972 I purchased an 1854-O quarter in a nice VF grade with a large crudely shaped New Orleans mintmark. There was no listed reference to this variety so I just put the piece in my set and forgot about it. Then in 1973 I saw a listing in an auction catalogue that reminded me of the coin that I had recently purchased. Lot #647 in the Clarke E. Gilhousen Sale of October 2, 1973 by Superior Stamp and Coin Co. listed an 1854-O quarter with a Huge O mintmark. The description provided for this piece is as given below:

1854-O Huge O. Large heavy mintmark. This is the second specimen ever reported. The first specimen, which was considered unique, sold in a mid-1950s New Netherlands sale and was also quite worn. It is possible that this coin could very well be the New Netherlands piece. A distinct, major mintmark variety which could stimulate four figure bidding. Strong Good.

A picture of this coin was shown in the catalogue. It appeared to have the same oversized mintmark as the coin that I purchased the year before. I therefore took my coin to a show that I was attending shortly after the Gilhousen sale. I wanted to verify that I did indeed have an example of the 1854-O Huge O quarter that had just been reported to be very rare. While at the show I remember one dealer asking me what I collected. I told him that I was actively collecting Seated quarters and that I was particularly interested in die varieties. The dealer told me that he had just the coin for me and reached into his case and pulled out a low grade 1854-O Huge O quarter. Accompanying this coin was the page from the Gilhousen catalogue describing the variety as being possibly unique. He told me that this was the only known example

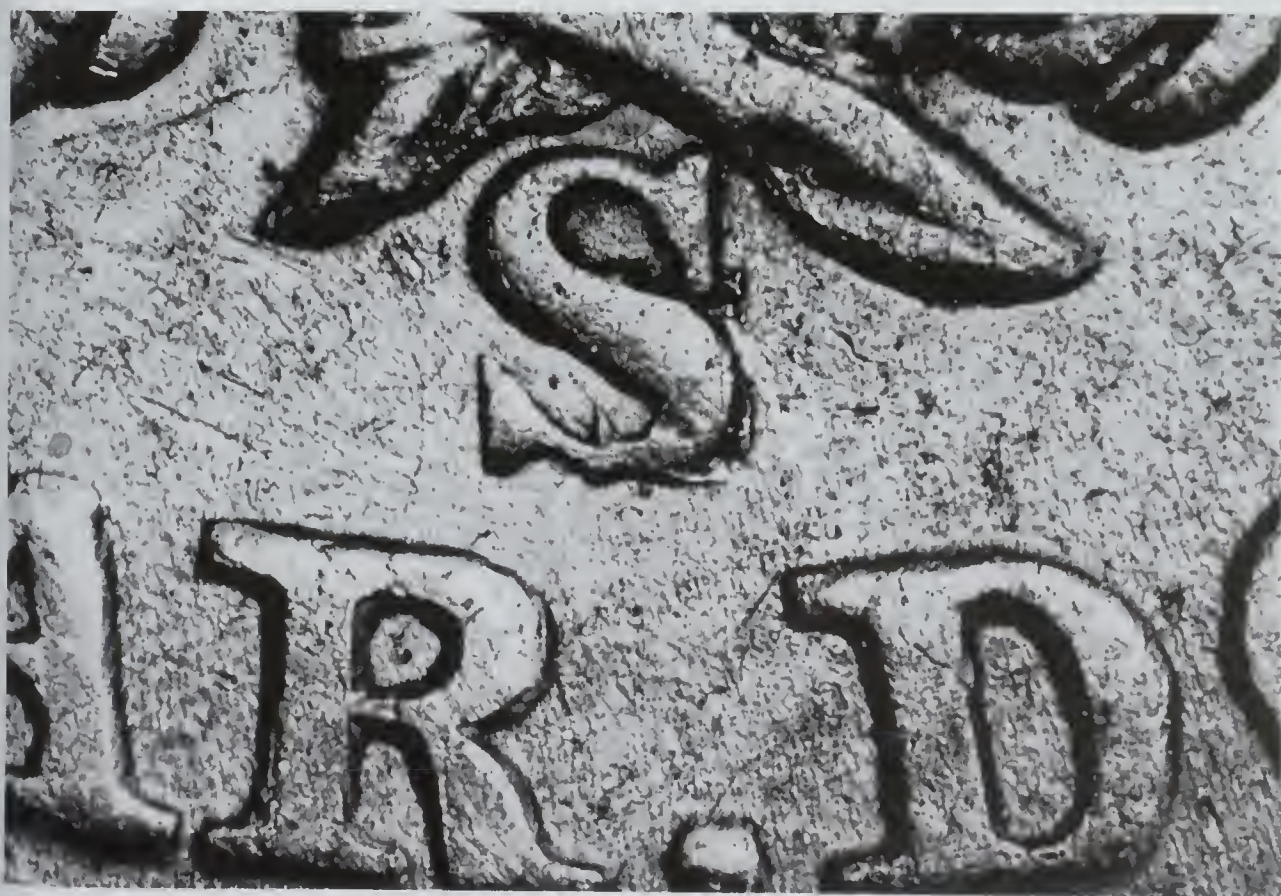
besides the Gilhousen coin and that I should not pass up this unique opportunity to acquire a truly great rarity in the Seated quarter series. He built up the rarity of his coin for another ten minutes while I examined it. He then said that he would quote me a price for the coin if I was interested in becoming the new owner of this rarity. I thanked him for the opportunity to examine his coin but told him that I was not interested in buying it. When he asked me why I wasn't interested, I casually reached into my pocket and pulled out my higher grade 1854-O Huge O quarter. He looked at the coin and then at me in utter disbelief, wondering how I could possibly have produced a better example of the same variety that he had just been trying to sell me as a prized rarity. He never said another word! He just picked up his coin, put it back into his case and began talking to other customers who had gathered at his table.

It is now known that the 1854-O Huge O quarter is not as rare as was once believed. Within a year of this incident I was able to purchase a VG example of this variety for \$10 and then a beautiful lustrous XF-40 example for \$32. Prices for this variety have increased sharply over the years but the 1854-O Huge O quarter is now considered to be only a scarce variety in the series.



Crudely Shaped New Orleans Mintmark on 1854-O Huge O Quarter

During the 1970s I found the early San Francisco mint quarters to be scarce but available with some searching. I remember that in 1972 I purchased an 1857-S quarter in a nice XF-40 grade. The piece had sharp detail, strong reeding and nice gray surfaces. I examined this coin briefly and then stored it with the other pieces in my set. One day I was studying the reverse dies of my San Francisco mint quarters when I noticed something surprising. All of my no motto San Francisco quarters had a Large S mintmark below the eagle except for my 1857-S coin. The Large S mintmark on the early San Francisco quarters measures 1.3mm tall. My 1857-S quarter had a Medium S mintmark that measured only 1.0mm tall. Over the next few years I examined all of the 1857-S quarters that I could find. I discovered that they all had the Large S mintmark, the same size as the mintmark on the other early San Francisco quarters. I began to believe that I had a very special piece in this 1857-S quarter with the Medium S mintmark so I studied it more carefully. It had the proper weight and the proper edge reeding for a genuine San Francisco quarter but I began to notice things about it that I didn't like. I found a number of die defects and die lines on its surfaces as well as numerous raised pits in the field. There are also some uneven areas in the field around the obverse stars and similar defects in the field around the lettering on the reverse. These characteristics gave me the uneasy feeling that the piece might be a counterfeit. After all, its mintmark was smaller than that seen on all of the other no motto San Francisco quarters. But then again the mintmark on my 1857-S Medium S quarter is exactly the same size as the under mintmark on my 1856-S Large S over Small s quarter.



Reverse of 1856-S Large S over Small s quarter. All known no motto San Francisco quarters were struck from a reverse with the Large S mintmark as shown in this picture. Can anybody produce a no motto quarter struck from a Small s reverse as shown by the under mintmark?

The mintmark on my 1857-S Medium S quarter is 1.0mm tall and it is centered under the crotch between the feather and the branch stem. The mintmark is about the same distance from the crotch and the top of the R in QUAR and a little farther from the upper serif of the D in DOL. I have never seen another example of this variety in over 30 years of studying Seated quarters. Can any club member produce another example of the 1857-S Medium S quarter?

In his encyclopedia of United States coins Walter Breen listed an 1857-S Medium S quarter and called it extremely rare. I have serious doubts about whether this variety actually exists. I believe that it is entirely possible that the Breen listing is the result of the appearance of counterfeit specimens with the Medium S mintmark. After all, Breen never indicated that he had seen one, only that the Medium S mintmark had been reported for this date.

While I was building my set of Seated quarters I actively searched out new die varieties in the series. But with no quarter reference book there was no reliable source that identified more than a few major varieties. I therefore often had to use my experience with Seated coinage to identify patterns that would help me find new varieties. This was the strategy that I used to identify a new hub for 1876 quarters.

I knew that a new reverse hub with a pointed left ribbon end had been introduced into the Seated dime series in 1876. I was also aware that a new reverse hub with a closed bud had been introduced into the half dollar series during the same year.



Type I Reverse Hub with Closely Spaced TAT

Since this was the centennial year I thought that a new reverse hub might also have been introduced into the Seated quarter series. With a detailed study of the Seated quarter reverse over a period of several weeks, I was able to identify a new hub for the 1876 quarter. I also found a few key characteristics that would distinguish the hubs. In particular I found that the old Type I reverse hub had a closely spaced TAT in STATES while the new Type II reverse hub had a widely spaced TAT in STATES. Over a period of several months I was able to find coins struck from both hubs for 1876, 1876-S and 1876-CC quarters. This indicated that both hubs were used side by side during the centennial year of 1876.

The surprise came when I began studying other quarters in an attempt to identify the years in which both hubs were used together. While the new reverse hubs were first used in 1876 on dimes and half dollars, I was shocked to discover that a new Type II reverse hub was used to strike 1875, 1875-S and 1875-CC quarters. This was a year earlier than I expected to find the new hub. I concluded that the mint must have redesigned the reverse dies for the different denominations over a two year period to reduce the work load on the die sinkers at the mint. I was also shocked to find that a Type I reverse die was still on hand and used to strike 1880 quarters. Shortly after purchasing my 1880 Type II quarter I found a nice 1880 Type I quarter in AU condition. I have always been surprised by the fact that an issue with such a small mintage would have reverses from two different hubs.

I have tried to provide some information on my experiences while collecting Liberty Seated quarters during the 1970s. The Seated quarter series was almost completely ignored thirty years ago but today it is collected by many enthusiastic club members. The publicity given to the sale of several 1873-CC No Arrows quarters in recent years has highlighted the beauty and rarity of this 19th century series of Seated coins.



Type II Reverse Hub with Widely Spaced TAT

Shishmanian & Garstang Win Ahwash Award for 2003

Greg Shishmanian and Dennis Garstang won the Kamal M. Ahwash Literary Award for 2003 for their contribution “ A Rarity Study of XF and AU Liberty Seated Dollars” that appeared in Issue #85 of the journal. The Ahwash Award is given annually for the best article to appear in the journal as voted by the club members. This year’s award covered the material published in Issues #85 to #87 and the award winner was determined as a result of a vote by club members during October 2003. A total of 219 ballots was received from club members who were asked to vote for no more than three articles which they liked best during the last year. It was decided to allow individuals to vote for three articles because the large number of choices would likely spread the votes out among many articles. There were 496 votes cast from the 219 ballots. A complete listing of the results is given below.

RANK	ARTICLE AND AUTHOR	VOTES
1.	A Rarity Study of XF and AU Liberty Seated Dollars by Greg Shishmanian and Dennis Garstang	77
2.	New Seated Half Dollar Varieties by Dick Osburn	63
3.	Counterfeit Dollars from the Old City in Shanghai by Gerry Fortin	59
4.	Gobrecht Dollars Revisited – Part III: The Judd-58 Pattern Coins by Michael Carboneau and James Gray	49
5.	An Analysis of the 1840 to 1853 No Arrows Quarters of the Philadelphia Mint by Ken Cable-Camilleis	48
6.	A Survey of Liberty Seated Auction Sales, 1985-2002 by Leonard Augsburger and Darrell Low	31
7.	Let’s be More Objective About Coin Grading by Weimar White	31
8.	A Look at the Queller Family Collection of Seated Half Dollars by Darrell Low	27
9.	A Profile of the 1859-S Seated Dollar by Weimar White	23
10.	A Survey of Liberty Seated Auction Sales, 1985-2002: Quarters and Half Dollars by Leonard Augsburger and Darrell Low	22
11.	Grading the Toned Coins from the Benson Collection by Michael Atkins	21
12.	A Mysterious 1844 Seated Dollar by Gerald Kochel	20
13.	A Survey of Liberty Seated Auction Sales, 1985-2002: Seated Dollars by Leonard Augsburger and Darrell Low	17
14.	The Parallel World of Liberty Seated Patterns by Rick Kay	8

With all of the eligible articles receiving support for the best article award, it is evident that there are diverse interests and preferences within the club. However, even one vote for an article indicates that it was important to at least one reader, and therefore a worthy contribution to the available information on Liberty Seated coinage. The voting procedure was revised this year to allow club members to vote for the Ahwash award while sending in their club dues for the new year. This revision has been successful in increasing participation in the voting with almost three times the usual number of members sending in their ballots.

The officers wish to thank all those members who took the time to vote for this important award. We would also like to thank all those members who contributed articles during the past year and hope that we will continue to receive interesting and exciting material in the years ahead.

The Editor



1890 PCGS Proof-67 Seated Half Dollar

Deep Cameo, Blast White

PCGS reports only this one coin at this level with none graded higher in Deep Cameo.

I placed this coin at auction with Ira and Larry Goldberg in their Pre-Long Beach Sale of January 26-27, 2004.

The coin did not reach its reserve bid of \$33,000 in that sale.

Any club member who might be interested in the coin can reach me on my cell phone at (717) 991-3108 or they can contact the Goldbergs about the piece.

Don Cohen

Letters to the Editor

In Issue #86 of the journal Dick Osburn presented a fine overview article on Seated half dollar varieties that have been identified since the publication of the Wiley-Bugert guide in 1993. One of the descriptions that caught my attention was the spiked foot variety for the 1847-O half dollar with the very heavy die line that penetrates Liberty's sandal. I was wondering if this was the same variety that I described and pictured in Issue #60 of the journal in July 1994. At that time I was writing about a pronounced date style difference found on my 1847-O half dollar compared to a piece described previously in the journal. However I also made an additional reference to a die crack or spike in Liberty's foot on my coin. Could this be the same feature that is described by Dick Osburn for his spiked foot variety?

Paul Brill
LSCC #749

I would like to report that I nearly bought a counterfeit 1846 Seated dollar from an eBay auction just recently. After a close examination of the computer scan I discovered that it was identical to the counterfeit coin illustrated by Gerry Fortin in Issue #85 of the journal. I am writing to warn club members that the same individual is also selling a large number of Trade Dollars on eBay. I strongly suspect that they may be counterfeits as well, but the dates were either different from those in the Fortin article or the pieces were made from a different coin. There were multiple listings for coins with the same date and two pieces seemed to have identical scans. While I am not an expert on Trade Dollars, I wanted to warn people to be careful and to check for counterfeit coins when purchasing Trade Dollars in eBay auctions.

I later learned that the individual who tried to sell me the counterfeit 1846 dollar had his account closed. It was found that all of the coins he sold were counterfeit. However, these coins are still out there and they may eventually surface and be offered for sale by another Internet seller.

Paul Bradley
LSCC #1884



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

LIBERTY SEATED COLLECTORS CLUB

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

I'M A COLLECTOR ☐ DEALER ☐ COLLECTOR/DEALER ☐

YOU MAY ☐ MAY NOT ☐

SEND MY NAME AND ADDRESS TO OTHER CLUB MEMBERS.

I COLLECT BY DATE SEATED HALF DIMES ☐ DIMES ☐
QUARTERS ☐ HALF DOLLARS ☐ DOLLARS ☐ ALL SEATED ☐

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

Membership Fee - \$15.00 for first year dues and initiation fee.

Fill in the above and mail with \$15.00 to:

Mark Sheldon • P.O. Box 261

Wellington, Ohio 44090



CHANGE OF ADDRESS

We ask that you notify us as soon as possible when you move or change your mailing address. It seems that we always have one or two *Journals* returned to us for improper address when a member has moved to a new location. In such cases, we must wait for the member to contact us and provide us with the new address. To avoid unnecessary delays in receiving the Journal and to assist us in keeping our mailing list current, ***we ask that you inform us as soon as possible of any change of address.***

**Reverse Picture of
1842-0 Half Dime
in Die State 3**



Your comments on any of the articles, ads, or club policies are invited. This is your club and the Officers are dedicated to operating it on behalf of the members. Address any comments to:

John McCloskey
Editor, Gobrecht Journal
5718 King Arthur Drive
Kettering, Ohio 45429